

Real estate bill

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committee's recommendations and proposed passage of the bill.

According to the bill passed last night, all real estate developers have to be registered with the authorities concerned, and an unregistered developer may be imprisoned for two years or fined Tk 10 lakh for advertising in the media any property development project.

If a developer fails to provide utility facilities in line with the prospectus concerned, he or she will be fined Tk 5 lakh, or imprisoned for a year for failing to pay the fine.

Another provision of the bill says a developer will be imprisoned for three years or fined Tk 20 lakh, or awarded both for constructing buildings in violation of approved design.

In case a developer does not comply with the contract with landowners or buyers, or keeps construction work unfinished and does not pay compensation for this, it will be considered cheating, says the bill.

And a developer may be imprisoned for up to two years or fined Tk 20 lakh, or awarded both for cheating.

Moreover, the bill says a landowner may be jailed for up to two years or fined Tk 10 lakh for violation of the contract signed with a developer.

A landowner may also face the same punishment if he or she cancels the contract signed with a developer without serving a notice at least 30 days before the date of cancellation, says the bill.

EXPATRIATE WELFARE BANK
Another bill was placed in parliament yesterday seeking to establish an expatriate welfare bank.

Justifying passage of the bill, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the proposed bank will provide loans to unemployed youths on soft terms so that they can go abroad for employment.

It will also give loans to non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) after their return home, the minister said in a written statement tagged with the bill.

The bank will also assist the NRBs to send remittance to country easily, he said.

The bill was sent to the parliamentary standing committee on the finance ministry for scrutiny.

Erosions hit

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flash floods inundated about 12 or 13 percent of the country's total landmass.

Meanwhile, an official of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said the districts located in Jamuna-basin are free from floodwaters. The districts in the Padma and Meghna basins will also be free from flood within the next few days, if water continued to recede at the current rate.

The situation in almost all the flood-hit districts will continue to improve today, while it will slightly deteriorate in Sylhet due to the heavy rainfall in Cherrapunji, said a FFWC bulletin.

The water level of the country's major rivers Padma and Jamuna will continue to fall today, while that of Meghna will remain steady.

The Kushiyara was flowing 147cm above danger level at Amalshid point yesterday while the Surma was flowing 101cm above the red mark at Kanaighat point, said an official of FFWC.

In Madaripur, over 500 families of four flood-hit upazilas have been further affected due to river erosion which has become severe due to strong current in Arial Khan, Kumar and Palardi rivers.

A total of 140 hectares of land of Char Vodrashan upazila in Faridpur has been eroded after flash flood, according to a primary assessment of the water development board.

In Sirajganj, Jamuna has eroded over 150 houses of five upazilas, but the district administration is yet to take any initiatives to rehabilitate the affected families.

Meanwhile, Over 200 families of Chilmari upazila in Kurigram have lost their homes in the flood.

House of horror

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accommodating a double-size bed. A small ceiling fan's blades whir near this reporter's scalp. A single unshaded light bulb hangs from the six-foot-high ceiling.

"Over the last 10 years my children have grown up here, in this room," says Mahfuza showing her bed and damp earthen floor. "We somehow survive. When the electricity goes away it is really hot," she muttered.

Along the corridor, women and their children, half-naked covered in dirt, curiously look on. In one of the rooms a colour television play a popular Hindi dance sequence at full volume.

At the other end of the corridor, the steep staircase is held by tying it to the bamboo column overhead. A small opening on the left houses the sole kitchen, with its four gas burners, two latrines and two water taps under which several women and children wash and bathe.

Anwar Boyati of Barisal has lived here for nearly 10 years with his four children. He holds his grandson in his lap and recounts how arguments break out among tenants over sharing the toilet, water and gas cooker.

"In the morning, tenants queue up for the toilet, water taps and cookers, and rows are frequent," he says. "Years ago there was a fire that destroyed most houses in the area. The burnt corrugated panels you see were recovered from the

ashes."
The temperature in the corridor keeps anyone here sweating at the best of times; during load shedding it is infernal. The strong pressure of the gas is rare in Dhaka. As two women cook rice over a fierce flame, the burners whoosh like a lit welding torch.

The uneven floor upstairs is made of old and squeaky pieces of wood amateurishly nailed into the bamboo columns. Gaps and larger holes allow the planks to move from left to right as people walk or children play.

"The house needs urgent repairs," says Boyati, "The landlord has promised to do it soon."

Banu, a tenant and mother of three, works as a maid in the neighbourhood. Two of her sons left this home years ago. Her daughter, Smriti, 13, is the only child in the complex who attends school.

"I am used to living here, although it is very difficult," Smrity says. "My goal is to study and be successful in life to give my hard-working mum a long holiday," says the Grade-7 student of Islamia High School.

Gazing through her window, Shoma takes a little solace looking at the most polluted river in the country, the Buriganga. When she shuts the window, darkness engulfs her room, hiding every stain, and allowing the newlywed's mind to fly back to her village by the cleaner Padma river.

Reasons behind

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The DC's stand not to recommend withdrawing a murder case against Pabna sadar upazila Chairman Mosharrif Hossain as per the law-maker's request was another reason for the conflict, they said.

The chairman is known to be a close associate of the lawmaker.

The two also have had differences over allotment of Test Relief (TR) rice and corrugated iron (CI) sheets meant for the poor people in the district.

The lawmaker demanded some 75 tonnes of TR rice and 65 bundles of CI sheets allocated for the poor, said the DC.

"We can't give him the rice, as it came for municipality," Regarding the CI sheets, he said, "We couldn't give him [the MP] more as we had to distribute them among the affected people."

Recently, the lawmaker requested the DC to remove the principal of Pabna Homeopathy College. The management committee headed by the DC refused to accept his request, further deteriorating the relation between them, sources at the DC office said in return for anonymity.

A number of senior Awami League leaders and general voters in the district are disappointed with the "arrangement and poor performance" of the lawmaker.

They believe the first-time lawmaker will not be able to implement his key election pledges -- to free the town from drug and terrorism.

Several AL leaders have also deserted the MP for his "controversial role" and the conflict with the administration. The MP, also the organising secretary of Pabna district AL, does not communicate with the senior party leaders in making decisions, local leaders said.

"Friday's incident has tarnished the image of the MP and the Awami League at large. The problem must be resolved properly," said advocate Anjad Hossain, a veteran AL leader and former lawmaker of Pabna sadar.

He said the untoward incident occurred as the DC and MP failed to work through coordination. "The prime minister should take the matter seriously on her return from abroad," he added.

Freedom fighter and AL supporter Baby Islam said the party and the MP cannot avoid responsibility in the incident. Asked about his alleged arrogance, Golam Faruk Prince said he is new in the parliament, and might make some mistakes.

On Friday's incident, he said it occurred due to the non-cooperation of the DC, adding that actions will be taken against those involved.

One week on, police have arrested two of the 31 persons accused in the case filed in this connection. Sources at the DC office said the main accused are moving freely in the city but police cannot find them.

The chamber judge of the Appellate Division stayed the HC order a few days ahead of the polls that finally cleared the way for his candidacy. MK Alamgir was elected MP from Chandpur-1 constituency defeating BNP nominated candidate ANM Enamul Haque Milon.

The Appellate Division on July 15 this year rejected Alamgir's petition that sought permission to appeal against the HC order. The Supreme Court verdict came 11 days after it squashed Alamgir's conviction and sentence that disqualified his candidacy in the polls.

Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hossain yesterday told The Daily Star about EC's action on vacating Alamgir's membership in parliament. He said the EC would send a copy of the special gazette to the Speaker who would inform the House about it.

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was the chief of parliamentary standing committee on public accounts in the ninth parliament. Earlier on February 3, the EC cancelled AL lawmaker Maj (ret) Jasim Uddin's membership in the parliament and announced the seat for Bhola-3 constituency vacant.

The Supreme Court declared Jasim's candidacy in the ninth parliamentary polls illegal, as he had contested the polls before five years elapsed after his retirement from the defence service.

Earlier on February 3, the EC cancelled AL lawmaker Maj (ret) Jasim Uddin's membership in the parliament and announced the seat for Bhola-3 constituency vacant.

The Supreme Court declared Jasim's candidacy in the ninth parliamentary polls illegal, as he had contested the polls before five years elapsed after his retirement from the defence service.

Meanwhile, the district administration will today sit with the civil society members and other professionals to discuss the incident of the attack on the officials.

Anthrax

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spore is destroyed, they added in a seminar titled 'Anthrax: Public Health Issues' which was held at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU). Sources said as people are affected with the disease for the second time, it created panic among them and consumption of red meat has reduced in last few weeks.

Meanwhile, ten fresh anthrax cases in human were suspected in Pabna yesterday taking the number of the infected to 599 in the country since August 18.

Five cases were confirmed in Santhia and five in Faridpur upazila, according to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

But the government has taken various steps to control anthrax including vaccinating the cattle in affected areas, treating the patients and screening the cattle coming from India through the 22 points of the country, said State Minister for Health Mozibur Rahman Fakir in the seminar.

He also said that before the Eid-ul-Azha, public health experts would screen the cattle and certificates would be given. The livestock, health and LGRD ministry are working together in this regard and a National Steering Committee is already formed.

The experts in the seminar said the incidence of anthrax is showing a downtrend and it is likely to ease within a short time.

They also suggested blanket vaccination of the cattle, use of antibiotic to treat the cattle, burying the sick dead animals after being wrapped in polythene and increasing community awareness to tackle anthrax.

Dr Salahuddin Khan of ICDDR,B, Prof M A Jaill Chowdhury of BSMMU, Dr Benazir Ahmed, principal scientific officer of IEDCR, presented papers in the seminar while Vice Chancellor of BSMMU Prof Pran Gopal Datta, former vice chancellor Prof Nazrul Islam were also present.

MK Alamgir

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of the ninth parliamentary elections cancelled Alamgir's candidacy application as Alamgir was convicted and sentenced to 13 years imprisonment in a graft case in July 2007, during the state of emergency.

The conviction by the trial court under emergency power rules barred Awami League presidium member Alamgir from taking part in the polls.

Alamgir filed an appeal with the EC challenging the RO's decision, but the EC rejected it. He later filed a petition with the High Court, which also rejected the appeal. The AL leader then filed a petition with the Appellate Division against the HC order.

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TIB worried

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comments about recruitment are not withdrawn, it will hinder growth of professional excellence in an important sector like healthcare.

The TIB executive director noted that it is obligatory to create a competitive environment with equal opportunity for all to get government jobs. But it is unfortunate that the adviser gave a veiled threat to officials in case only the ruling party men are not appointed in the community clinics even if they do not qualify for the jobs.

TIB thinks the comments by a person holding such a responsible position in the government will deter implementation of its election pledge of institutionalising democracy, establishing good governance and preventing corruption, Iftekhar said.

DCC, municipal

FROM PAGE 1
The tenure of the present DCC mayor expired in May 2007, but the election remained suspended due to the state of emergency at that time and other complications afterwards.

Similarly, the tenure of mayors and councillors of over 270 municipalities expired in early 2009 while that of chairmen and councillors of over 4,300 union parishads in early 2008.

But the EC could not hold the polls in absence of a precise law and other reasons.

The government introduced new laws relating to municipalities and union parishads at the end of the last year. But some provisions of the laws regarding redrawing boundaries of the wards under the two local government bodies made it difficult for the EC to go for the polls.

The EC feared that social disorder might occur after redrawing the boundaries of the municipalities and the union parishads in line with the laws.

In response to the EC's request, the government moved to amend the laws, dropping the provisions and keeping population difference more or less 10 percent from one ward to another.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam yesterday placed a bill in parliament to amend the municipality act by cancelling the provision of redrawing the boundaries of the wards under the municipalities, and keeping the population difference about 10 percent.

Another bill is likely to be placed to amend the law concerning union parishads.

All-party team leaves behind hope, fear in Jammu-Kashmir

IANS, Jammu

The all-party delegation led by union Home Minister P Chidambaram yesterday wind up its three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir and returned to New Delhi from here, leaving behind a gleam of hope and a cloud of fear.

The 39-member delegation met almost 1,000 people from a cross section of society in the state and heard people until the midnight. But some people, including commoners and the Kashmiri Hindu leaders, were annoyed at not being given time to interact with the visitors.

The highlight of the visit, however, remained the meeting of some delegation members with the separatist leaders.

The members met headline separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani twice Monday evening and Tuesday morning and also visited moderates -- All Parties Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front's (JKLF) Yasin Malik in Srinagar and jailed president of the Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party Shabir Shah in Jammu.

This was being touted as a 'success' of the visit by some delegation members, especially Communist Party of India-Maxist (CPI-M) leader Sita Ram Yechury, who described the interaction with separatists as a 'meaningful exercise'.

Separatists, who had reiterated their known positions during the meetings, are learnt to be waiting as to how the delegation on its return would respond to their suggestions.

"Let's hope that this time you understand things better," Shabir Shah told the delegates who called on him at a nursing home, where he was temporarily shifted Tuesday, from Kot Bhalwal jail near here, to facilitate his meeting with the delegation members.

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gation members. It was also a message of hope for some, like Chief Minister Omar Abdullah who felt that the delegation's visit was a 'significant step'. He hoped that there would be 'movement forward' in addressing problems faced by the people in the Kashmir Valley.

More than 100 people have been killed in the valley in over 100 days of renewed unrest and the situation is being kept under control by an almost round-the-clock curfew and heavy deployment of security forces.

Omar Abdullah's National Conference party demanded withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and also greater autonomy to the state - a semi-sovereign status in which the state has all powers except those for dealing with communications, defence and foreign affairs and designation of head of the government as prime minister and that of the head of the state as 'sadar-e-riyasat'.

Flood refuges threaten Pakistan political stability

REUTERS, Islamabad

Millions of people forced to flee their homes by Pakistan's worst ever floods may emerge as the most explosive issue for a feeble government in the wake of a disaster that will strain the economy for years to come.

Pakistan was already under growing pressure to deal with over one million people forced from their homes by fighting between the army and home-grown Taliban militants in the northwest.

Now it has to devise a comprehensive strategy to tackle a wider crisis -- 10 million people displaced by the floods -- that could create political instability in a frontline state in the U.S. war on militancy.

"If these people are not somehow accommodated and their issues are not addressed in terms of basic shelter, basic food, medical care and rehabilitation and in terms of livelihood, then we are looking at potentially large social unrest," said Kamran Bokhari, South Asia director at STRATFOR global intelligence firm.

Currency

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Monirul Islam, deputy commissioner (DC) of DB told reporters they acted on a tip off and recovered 37 fake notes of Rs1000 and 33 notes of Rs500 denomination from his residence.

During preliminary interrogation arrestee Solaiman Majumder, 33, told the detectives the forged notes were produced in Pakistan and were brought into the country with the help of a foreign detective organisation.

A foreign airline was used to bring the fake currencies to Bangladesh from Pakistan where they were circulated in the local market as well as in Nepal.

He said they also produced fake US dollars as well as Indian currencies.

Detained chief of Jam'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Maulana Saidur Rahman (JMB) confessed during recent interrogation that they used to receive monetary support regularly from Solaiman.

However, Solaiman denied his involvement in counterfeiting money before the reporters at the DB office yesterday. He said he had bought the currencies from one Aman as he was preparing to go to India.

Solaiman's name surfaced while some Pakistani nationals including Danish and Sabir Ali were arrested a few months ago.

Solaiman was detained in February but was set free on bail five weeks into his arrest when he went to Pakistan, DB sources said.

Of Solaiman's eight accomplices Faisal, Aman and Rafiq acted as wholesalers of the forged notes, said DC Monir, adding, Rafiq who was arrested on September 16 is currently in prison, while Faisal and Aman were arrested but later set free on bail.

The DB is preparing to produce him before the court with a prayer for a ten-day remand and also for filing a case on charge of helping militants.

Rajuk knocks

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Rajuk Executive Engineer Monowar Hossain, 40 policemen and labourers took part in the drive.

The drive will continue today in Sections 10 and 3, said Rajuk sources.

Bangladesh faces

FROM PAGE 16
The finance ministry official said the government agrees on most of the observations in the report. But it differs with the issue of transshipment point of drugs, which would be communicated to the RRG.

The report lauds the government's recent steps against money laundering and terrorism but observes that the measures have some deficiencies.

It observes that most of the terrorism in Bangladesh can be classified as domestic. Home-grown groups operating within its boundaries do not require large amount of money to conduct violent acts and their equipment or explosives are reported to be unsophisticated and crude. Financing of such groups is classified as micro-financing.

But some terrorist groups designated by the UN are active in Bangladesh, posing a serious threat to Bangladesh.

These groups are: Al Haramain (Bangladesh Branch), Global Relief Foundation (GRF), Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harakatul-Jihad al-Islami (Huji). The report says JMB members have publicly claimed to receive funding from Saudi Arabia.

Corruption is endemic in Bangladesh and is recognised by the government as one of the biggest problems of the country. It has been noted as a source and transit country for trafficking men, women and children for the purpose of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation, the report says.

Bangladesh has a cash-based economy and bank transactions and bulk cash smuggling are most common methods of laundering. It is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh for sending illegal money abroad. The vulnerability to terror finance stem from foreign remittances sent in the name of charities and the use of cash couriers, it says.

Bangladesh's non-profit organisation (NPO) sector includes 60,000 registered

Produce

FROM PAGE 16
Earlier on Tuesday, the tribunal directed the jail authorities to produce Sayedee before it yesterday for the allegation against him. But it deferred the date as the jail authorities said Sayedee was ill and not physically fit to be produced before the tribunal.

The tribunal comprised of its Chairman Justice Nizamul Huq, Justice ATM Fazle Kabir and Justice AKM Zaheer Ahmed began the yesterday's proceedings at 10:35am.

Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali yesterday submitted a supplementary petition to the court stating that Sayedee should be kept in prison on charges of committing crimes against humanity and peace during the country's Liberation War.

If Sayedee is released, he might flee the country, damage the evidence and try to hamper the trial against him, he said.

Sayedee's lawyer Tajul Islam said his client was not sick, but the government did not produce him before the court to delay the proceedings since there were no sufficient documents and evidence on the allegations.

The tribunal asked the prosecution and defence lawyers to place their arguments on October 12 in presence of Sayedee.

societies, associations, clubs, companies limited by guarantee and foundation.

There is no overall strategy to identify and address money laundering and the risk of terror finance in these NPOs. The supervision of NPO is inadequate and compliance with registration and the obligation to financial reporting is very low, it observes.

The authorities in Bangladesh lack the capacity to investigate and prosecute money laundering offences, and effectively freeze, seize or confiscate proceeds of crime.

The report points out that the ACC has the sole authority to investigate such offences but has little capacity to undertake the role.

Bangladesh government has already informed the FATF about the measures it would take to overcome the deficiencies, said a high official of finance ministry.

The report was handed over to the government on September 15 after a meeting between RRG representatives and a Bangladesh delegation in Sydney, Australia.

Govt petitions

FROM PAGE 16
Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal, submitted petitions on August 23 and September 15 for withdrawing the case on recommendation from the home ministry.

Lawyers said it is the first time that a court rejected a government petition for withdrawing a case on political grounds since the ruling party assumed power.

Bashir Ali, assistant commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police of Panchlaish zone, was shot dead in front of Omar Gani MES College near the GEC intersection on February 11, 1996, during a movement against the then BNP-led government.

MA Newaji, the then officer-in-charge of Panchlaish Police Station, filed a murder case against 49 Chhatra League leaders and activists. Former BCL leader of MES College Fariduddin Ahmed Chowdhury was also accused in the case.

The charge sheet against the accused was submitted on November 13 the same year. Deposition of 26 of the 45 witnesses had been taken.

In 2003, Fariduddin submitted a petition to the High Court for postponement of the